

Appl. No. 09/819,168
Amdt. dated September 2, 2004
Reply to Office action of March 2, 2004

REMARKS

Reconsideration is respectfully requested. Claims 1-50 are pending in the application. Claims 9-13, 19-44 and 50 are withdrawn as being directed to non-elected inventions. The non-elected claims are canceled without prejudice to the filing of any divisional applications directed thereto. Claims 1, 14, 49 and 49 are amended herein.

Interview Summary:

Applicant's attorney wishes to thank the Examiner for the courtesy extended in the telephone interview of August 10, 2004. The draft amendment submitted prior to the interview and attached with the Examiner's interview summary mailed August 16, 2004, was discussed and applicant's representative presented the points discussed in the draft amendment. The claims were discussed in general and specifically the independent claims 1, 14, 45 and 49 were discussed. No agreement was reached as to allowability of any of the claims.

Remarks Continued

Applicant now resubmits the draft amendments and remarks hereinbelow. However, applicant adds the further comments as follows: In the Examiner's interview summary, the Examiner states that the claims do not include the limitation of providing a delayed visual point repositioning. After considering this point that the Examiner mentioned, Applicant respectfully

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submits that this concept is claimed. For example, claim 1 includes:

1) a timer for measuring a fixed time after the timing decision unit decides that said player character and said object satisfy the predetermined relation; and

2) visual point position setting unit for shifting said visual point position along with the movement of said player character . . . and changing said visual point position in a predetermined range . . . , when the elapse of said fixed time is detected by said timer.

These items do claim and support the concept of a delayed visual repositioning, since the visual point position is changed when the elapse of the fixed time has been detected. This is a delayed visual repositioning. Therefore, this concept is claimed and does define over the cited art.

With respect to claim 14, it includes a visual point position setting unit for shifting the visual point position . . . after a predetermined duration being greater than zero.

Again, this claims the concept of a delayed repositioning of the visual point position.

Regarding claim 49, it includes changing the visual point position . . . after the elapse of a fixed time wherein said fixed time is more than zero. Again, it is respectfully submitted that this does therefore claim the delayed reposition of the visual point position.

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With respect to claim 45, this claim as amended includes the concept of a delay before the transparency is accomplished. It is respectfully submitted that this is not shown or suggested by the Miyamoto et al and Rieder documents, whether considered alone or when combined.

The drawings were objected to because in FIG. 4, step 104, the word "character" should be changed to "character". A proposed drawing correction is submitted herewith.

Informalities in claims 1 and 45 noted by the Examiner have been made with amendment to correct the phrase "one of the shape" to read "one of the shapes".

Claim 49 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, as allegedly being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

Applicant has amended the claim to address the antecedent basis issue noted by the Examiner.

The specification is amended to correct a typographical error.

The Miyamoto document discloses many features of a video game including moving a camera in a play environment to the side of an obstacle when the player-controlled object (or character) goes behind and becomes hidden by the obstacle. However, the document does not anticipate applicant's invention as claimed. Independent claim 1, and claims 2-8 which depend from claim 1,

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include the recitation "visual point position setting unit for shifting said visual point position...when the elapsed time of said fixed time is detected by said timer". This is an important and significant distinction not anticipated by Miyamoto. Miyamoto provides rigorous and detailed video game design teachings, but it does not teach or suggest providing a delayed visual point repositioning. Only applicant has recognized the advantage of delaying visual point repositioning to avoid confusing the player's grasp of the game environment. Miyamoto teaches instant movement of a camera trained on a player-controlled object (Mario) as soon as the player-controlled object "can not be viewed or 'photographed' by the camera" (col. 31 line 49). Miyamoto teaches (col. 31 line 50) "to continuously display Mario at all times". To continuously display the player-controlled object (Mario) requires there be no delay. It is a central feature of Miyamoto's camera angle manipulation aspect of game design teaching to "prevent obstruction between the eye of the camera and the operable object" (col. 3 lines 10-11). It is the applicant who recognizes that players get confused as to where they are in the playing environment when the emphasis is on following the operable object as is done with prior art video games, and as is done by Miyamoto et al. And, it is the applicant who has invented a solution to avoid the confusion by delaying for a fixed time visual point repositioning. At least by the Claim

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1 recitations identified here claim 1, and claims 2-8 which depend therefrom, avoid and are not anticipated by Miyamoto.

The Examiner seems to be equating the fixed time by which a change in viewing perspective is delayed in applicant's invention as claimed with the use of periods of time in the Miyamoto document. However, the periods of time have nothing to do with delaying movement of Miyamoto's camera angle. Most uses of time periods in Miyamoto regard software details. Column 25, lines 10-15 describe camera angles determined as a function of time during title and game ending demonstrations. One use detects inactivity of Mario. The only use of the term "timer" by Miyamoto is column 10, line 59, and is regarding allowing external devices to interrupt the main processor. Applicant has recognized and has solved the problem of throwing the player into a state of confusion about the player character's whereabouts as happened in the player environment with prior art automatic camera movements. Applicant delays visual point position movement with a time delay, not by using time periods similar to those taught by Miyamoto.

Applicant has amended independent claims 14 and 49 by further highlighting applicant's inventive use of time durations to help a player of applicant's video game grasp the display contents. Claims 15-18 depend from and include all the limitations of claim 14.

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The Examiner has rejected claims 45-48 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Miyamoto et al U.S. Patent 6,139,433 as applied to claims 1-8, 14-18 and 49, and further in view of Rieder U.S. Patent 6,,017,272. Rieder discloses a video game apparatus, method and medium with a game space assumed as an interior of a structure partitioned by a floor and walls. When player character position specifying unit 34 determines that the display position of the player character is hidden behind a wall or the floor, an image synthesizing unit 38 modifies the image data so that the wall or floor concealing the player character is made semitransparent and the rear thereof is displayed.

As discussed above, the Miyamoto reference does not teach as alleged and applied by the Examiner. If combined with the Rieder document, the combination would not enable one skilled in the art to make applicant's invention as claimed. Claim 45 and dependent claims 46-48 recite "...a transmission process of changing the degree of transparency...". Once again the applicant has applied an inventive aspect to avoid confusing the player with abrupt changes to the playing environment heretofor unrealized by the prior art, an inventive aspect absent in Miyamoto and Rieder.

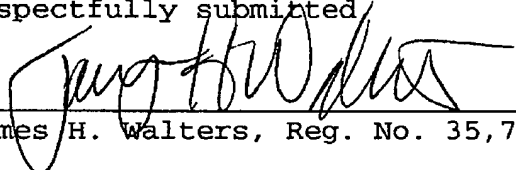
In light of the above noted amendments and remarks, this application is believed in condition for allowance and notice thereof is respectfully solicited. The Examiner is asked to

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contact applicant's attorney at 503-224-0115 if there are any questions.

Respectfully submitted,


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